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Readings Booklet

June 1997



English 33

Part B: Reading

Grade 12 Diploma Examination

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June 1997

**English 33 Part B: Reading
Readings Booklet
Grade 12 Diploma Examination**

Description

Part B: Reading contributes 50% of the total English 33 Diploma Examination mark.

There are 8 reading selections in the Readings Booklet and 70 questions in the Questions Booklet.

Time: 2 hours. You may take an additional 1/2 hour to complete the examination.

Instructions

- Be sure that you have an English 33 Readings Booklet **and** an English 33 Questions Booklet.
- You may **not** use a dictionary, thesaurus, or other reference materials.



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I. Questions 1 to 8 in your Questions Booklet are based on this short story.

JEZEBEL¹ JESSIE

For several days I had noticed my mother and father in earnest conversation. Whenever I came within hearing distance they stopped.

At first I hoped that it had something to do with Christmas, but this was a faint hope. They would never spend that much time on planning gifts. Something 5 was brewing and I had a suspicion it had to do with work.

This started with small chores. There was the matter of kindling for the kitchen stove and a supply of wood in the woodbox. Chickens had to be fed and watered and we had to gather the eggs.

10 The blow came on a November evening when Father interrupted me as I scuffled with grandfather.

"You seem to have a lot of spare energy these days," he began and when I didn't answer, continued, "I think it's time you started some regular work around here. Starting tomorrow morning. I want you to milk the red cow each morning and night."

15 I was stunned.

"You mean?"

"Yes," he said finally, "You'll milk Jessie."

I looked to Mother for help but she avoided my eyes. Jessie was a monstrous creature we had been trying for three years to get rid of, short of selling to the 20 canners. It would have been an admission by my father that he had been beaten in a deal if she went off to the packing plant.

None of the neighbors would buy her because she was awkward, wandering and cantankerous.

25 I had milked some before, but it was different to draw a permanent assignment each night and morning. It was my first sentence!

That night I had a dream that Jessie followed me to school and, when the teacher asked me to recite homework, the cow walked into the room and started doing it for me. This was interrupted by Father calling me as he was on his way down to light the fire.

30 I danced and pranced in the cold air and found no comfort in the kitchen. A northeast wind was slashing rain through the bleak dark as we trudged to the barn.

"I tell you boy," Father said, teething into the gale, "When you get the feel of it there's nothing to compare with the satisfaction of hard work."

Continued

¹Jezebel—from the Old Testament, the wife of King Ahab of Israel who caused many crimes to be committed; consequently, a scheming or shameless woman

It was pleasant in the stable with the compressed, animal heat of the night intact. The lanterns shed pale light and the stock attacked the feed with vigor. I stopped to look at the ugly face of my adversary. She seemed to be grinning and skelped² at me with the crooked horn.

Father was cheerful and gave me the best milking stool. I moved in gingerly, and sat down. The bulk of the cow moved like a great boat shifting with the tide against the pier. The trouble was that I was between the boat and the pier and I dug both fists into her as viciously as possible. She stayed smothering me, as if to underline who was boss, and then moved across to the other side of the stall. This seemed like co-operation until I realized it was merely to give her full room for an assault with her tail.

I can still feel the stinging lash. In a boyish rage I grabbed the tail and curled it. She slammed the pail with her hoof and shifted against me until I sprawled in the gutter. Father went on as if nothing was happening at all.

I could get mad, cry, run away or try milking again. I combined crying with the latter and there must have been some latent sense of sympathy in the bovine harridan³ because she let me go ahead.

After what seemed a dreadful length of time, I had only a thin layer of milk on the bottom of the pail. I heard father finish up the blue cow and move to the roan and still I grabbed and pulled and only a dribble of milk keened⁴ into the pail.

"Here boy," said my father, "Let me show you."

He sprayed the milk into the pail in great fashion, showing me how to use my thumb and first finger and the pressure from the palm of my hand. When the pail was half full, he stood up and said, "Now you can finish."

It worked pretty well. I got a rhythmic stroke and the milk streams plunged into the foaming pail and I was feeling quite satisfied. My legs were aching a bit, so I shoved the stool back and edged up. Then Jessie kicked and sent the pail flying. When Father got to me, I was desperately trying to pull her tail off.

Thus began the morning and evening ordeal of milking. They were the two spots of my life I dreaded. In time I could milk the old monster and, with constant vigilance, cope with her vagaries.

I found articles in farm magazines and papers suggesting it was wise to drop all dairy cattle and concentrate on beef. A professor who advocated letting the calves run with the cows was my hero. I left all these articles where father would be sure to read them, but it was a losing battle because we depended on the cream

Continued

²skelped—struck; directed a blow

³bovine harridan—a cow that acts like a vicious old woman

⁴keened—made a mournful sound

cheque each week during a majority of the year for the little cash money that was
70 available.

In the spring when the drovers⁵ came around I prayed father would dispose of Jessie. I plotted to let her into the new garden so mother's wrath might force Father to let the old villain go to the packing plant.

I came home one day from school and met the drover leading Jessie away
75 behind his buggy.

"I'll bet you feel sorry to see this one go," he laughed and I raced to the house.

Mother was smiling.

"Your prayers have been answered. Jessie got in the new corn patch this
80 morning."

"I didn't do it," I said guiltily.

"No," she said gently, "Your father left the gate open when he went to the village and I didn't notice it."

She added softly, "I think he blames me, but I was churning."

85 That night I started to milk the red heifer, a gentle creature without guile.⁶ Somehow, although I couldn't admit it to anyone, I missed the old reprobate.

Harry J. Boyce
Canadian writer and broadcaster.
Winner of the Stephen Leacock Medal
for humour, 1964

⁵drover—a dealer in cattle

⁶guile—cunning or craftiness

II. Questions 9 to 16 in your Questions Booklet are based on this poem.

FOR MUSIA'S GRANDCHILDREN

I write this poem
for your grandchildren
for they will know of your loveliness
only from hearsay,
5 from yellowing photographs
spread out on table and sofa
for a laugh.

- When arrogant
with the lovely grace you gave their flesh
10 they regard your dear frail body pityingly,
your time-dishonoured cheeks
pallid and sunken
and those hands
that I have kissed a thousand times
15 mottled by age
and stroking a grey ringlet into place,
I want them suddenly
to see you as I saw you
—beautiful as the first bird at dawn.
- 20 Dearest love, tell them
that I, a crazed poet all his days
who made woman
his ceaseless study and delight,
begged but one boon
25 in this world of mournful beasts
that are almost human:
to live praising your marvellous eyes
mischief could make glisten
like winter pools at night
30 or appetite put a fine finish on.

Irving Layton
Contemporary Canadian poet.
His collection of poetry, *A Red Carpet for the Sun*,
(1959) won a Governor-General's award

III. Questions 17 to 26 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from a play.

from BREAKER MORANT¹

CHARACTERS:

ORDERLIES 1 and 2—Minor Court
Officials

PRESIDENT—Court Judge

MAJOR THOMAS—Defence Officer

MAJOR BOLTON—Prosecution Officer

LT. MORANT (also referred to as
“Breaker”)

LT. HANDCOCK—a Co-defendant

LT. WITTON—a Co-defendant

LT. MORANT has been charged with the murder of eight Boer prisoners during the Boer War.² At the court martial, he attempts to explain that he and LIEUTENANTS HANDCOCK and WITTON were only following orders. The court martial, held near the war zone in South Africa, is conducted under British martial law.

ORDERLY 1: The Court is now in session.

ORDERLY 2: Court is now in session.

PRESIDENT: Major Thomas, would you care to call your first witness?

MAJOR THOMAS: No, Mr. President, I would like to depart from the schedule of
5 witnesses and call Lieutenant Morant to the stand.

PRESIDENT: This is highly irregular.

MAJOR THOMAS: Nevertheless, I crave the Court's indulgence.

PRESIDENT: This is a matter for the Prosecutor to determine. Do you have any
objection to Major Thomas departing from the schedule of witnesses?

10 MAJOR BOLTON: No, no I haven't, if the Defence Officer deems it necessary.

PRESIDENT: Oh, very well, very well.

MAJOR THOMAS: Call Lieutenant Morant.

ORDERLY 1: Lieutenant Morant.

ORDERLY 2: Lieutenant Morant. (MORANT takes the stand.)

15 MAJOR THOMAS: Lieutenant Morant, would you state your military service?

LT. MORANT: I hold, or held, a Commission in the now defunct Bushveldt
Carbineers. Prior to this I was with the South Australian Second Contingent.

Continued

¹Lt. Harry (Breaker) Morant—a member of the Bushveldt Carbineers, a contingent of Australian horsemen who entered the Boer War as riflemen. He earned the nickname “Breaker” for his skill at breaking horses to the saddle.

²Boer War—the conflict in South Africa from 1899 to 1902 between Great Britain and the two Dutch Boer republics, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal. The war led to a demand for army reform and a reaction against imperialism.

- Before that I was carrying despatches for the Flying Column under Colonel Lowe. I was in the general advance to Bloemfontein and took part in the engagements at Karee Siding and Kroonstadt. I was also working with a war correspondent for the London *Daily Telegraph*.
- MAJOR THOMAS: Haven't you left something out?
- LT. MORANT: I don't think so.
- MAJOR THOMAS: Were you not, along with Lieutenants Handcock and Witton, called upon to help defend this Garrison last night? You, yourself, being placed in charge of a wing . . . the way you acted last night was superb . . .
- PRESIDENT: The matter you are putting to the Court has no bearing on the charges of the defendants.
- MAJOR THOMAS: But I believe . . .
- 30 PRESIDENT: Major Thomas, we all had a trying night last night . . .
- LT. WITTON: Some more than others . . .
- PRESIDENT: The defendants were called upon to do their duty, no more.
- MAJOR THOMAS: But Mr. President I believe the characters of the defendants are very much on trial here. (*Picks up book.*) The Duke of Wellington³ stated 35 "the performance of a duty of honour and trust after knowledge of a military offence ought to convey a pardon." Surely . . .
- PRESIDENT: What has a statement by the Duke of Wellington to do with the law—I will tolerate no further mention of last night's events in this Court.
- MAJOR THOMAS: Do you mean to say . . .
- 40 LT. MORANT: Forget it, Major, you're wasting your time.
- MAJOR THOMAS (*Pause*): In a statement issued to this Court you mention Captain Hunt was a personal friend of yours?
- LT. MORANT: My best friend.
- MAJOR THOMAS: Then it must have come as a great shock to see his body cut up 45 as it was?
- LT. MORANT: It did.
- MAJOR THOMAS: It has been stated by several witnesses that you were gloomy, depressed, and in a state of emotional shock after Captain Hunt's death, is that true?
- 50 LT. MORANT: I—yes.
- MAJOR THOMAS: It was even said your mind was unhinged.
- LT. MORANT: I wouldn't go that far—I'm sane, if that's what you mean.
- PRESIDENT: What are you suggesting, Major?
- MAJOR THOMAS: I am suggesting that the defendant was not in control of

Continued

³Duke of Wellington—English soldier and statesman. On June 18, 1815, he inflicted a decisive defeat on Napoleon at Waterloo that crushed Napoleon's power forever.

- 55 himself at the time of the offence—that he cannot be held responsible for his action.
- LT. MORANT: Look, Major . . .
- MAJOR THOMAS: No, you look, Lieutenant Morant . . . did you shoot or have prisoners shot prior to Captain Hunt's death?
- 60 LT. MORANT: No.
- MAJOR THOMAS: You disobeyed orders, then?
- LT. MORANT: Yes I did . . . but . . .
- MAJOR THOMAS (*Sternly*): That will be all. (*Returns to his seat.*)
- PRESIDENT: Major Bolton.
- 65 MAJOR BOLTON (*Rising*): Lieutenant Morant, you say that Captain Hunt gave orders to shoot prisoners?
- LT. MORANT: Yes.
- MAJOR BOLTON: A very strong order, I would say. Didn't you question it?
- LT. MORANT: I did, but Captain Hunt said the orders came direct from
70 Headquarters in Pretoria.
- MAJOR BOLTON: And you accepted that?!
- LT. MORANT: Yes, I had no reason to disbelieve him. In fact, he told me when he took two polo ponies to Lord Kitchener's⁴ quarters that Colonel Hamilton had also said no prisoners.
- 75 (Slight murmur from court.)
- PRESIDENT: Are you suggesting that Lord Kitchener and Colonel Hamilton said take no prisoners?
- LT. MORANT: I'm bloody well saying it!
- PRESIDENT: We've only got your word for that.
- 80 LT. MORANT: Well, get Kitchener here!
- MAJOR BOLTON: Have you had any legal training?
- LT. MORANT: No, but I have read the Manual of Military Law.
- MAJOR BOLTON: And I've read the Practical Home Physician, but that doesn't make me an authority on medicine.
- 85 LT. MORANT (*Losing his temper*): Look, Major, I expected a straight gallop from you. If that's the way you want to ride, alright!
- MAJOR BOLTON: Were your courts martial constructed like this?!
- PRESIDENT: Answer the question. Were your courts martial constituted as this one is?
- 90 LT. MORANT: Were they like this? No, they weren't quite so handsome. We

Continued

⁴Lord Kitchener—British Commander-in-Chief who is alleged to have given a verbal order that no Boer prisoners were to be taken alive

- were out fighting Boers in the bush—on the Veldt⁵—not sitting comfortably behind barbed wire. We got them and shot them under rule 303.
- LT. HANDCOCK** (*To PRESIDENT*): You heard of that rule, mate, or have you spent all your soldierin' behind a desk!?
- 95 **PRESIDENT** (*To MORANT*): Your aggressive manner will get you nowhere.
- LT. MORANT**: Then get Kitchener. Get Kitchener here!
- PRESIDENT**: Restrain yourself Lieutenant.
- LT. MORANT** (*Standing*): I've restrained myself long enough.
- MAJOR THOMAS**: Sit down Harry.
- 100 **LT. MORANT** (*Walking over to PRESIDENT*): I'm sick and tired of playing it your way. Let's shoot down the middle for a change. We, the Carbineers, were put out into one of the wildest parts of South Africa for one reason, to kill the enemy the way they had been killing us.
- LT. WITTON**: Damned right.
- 105 **LT. HANDCOCK**: That's right! No quarter⁶ given, no quarter asked for!
- LT. MORANT**: Because your traditional military ways of warfare were not working. It was irregulars fighting irregulars.
- LT. HANDCOCK**: Like last night.
- LT. MORANT**: But now the war is near an end and we have all but won . . .
- 110 **LT. WITTON**: The politics begin.
- LT. MORANT**: Yes, the politics begin. You want to disown us, to forget we ever existed, we have become an embarrassment, well that's alright, but at least be honest about it!
- PRESIDENT**: Sit down, Lieutenant.
- 115 **LT. MORANT**: And let us set the records straight. I was the Commanding Officer after Simon Hunt's death, not Peter Handcock, not George Witton but I, and I take the blame. But in turn those above me should take it too. Who was the first to order "Shoot prisoners"? I wasn't, Simon Hunt wasn't, who was? That is what I demand to know and am entitled to know! (*Loses control, thumps table.*)
- LT. HANDCOCK**: Get Kitchener here!
- LT. WITTON**: Yes, here!
- PRESIDENT**: Order! I must remind you that you are still wearing the King's uniform. These outbursts are a disgrace to it . . . (*MORANT moves slowly back to witness stand. He is a defeated man now.*)
- 125 **MAJOR THOMAS**: With the Court's indulgence . . . it was not my intention to bring this matter up at this time but as the proceedings have gone the way

Continued

⁵Veldt—open country, neither cultivated nor true forest

⁶quarter—mercy granted to an enemy or opponent in a contest

they have I would like to submit an Australian newspaper dated November 16th of the year 1901, which states that Lord Kitchener issued orders that all Boers caught wearing the khaki uniform of British troops were to be shot.
(Passes newspaper to the PRESIDENT.)

PRESIDENT: A newspaper report from the Colonies can hardly be submitted as evidence in this Court!

MAJOR THOMAS: But it does suggest that Lord Kitchener could be asked to appear in this court martial in order to deny the report.

LT. HANDCOCK: You've avoided the issue for too long.

PRESIDENT: Order! I will tolerate no more of these outbursts! Understand! This Court will recess to examine the matter further. Major Thomas, I would like a word with you.

140 ORDERLY 1: This court will recess.

ORDERLY 2: This court will recess.

(All members of Court exit, MORANT giving the PRESIDENT a cold stare as he passes him.)

*Kenneth Ross
Contemporary Australian playwright.
Breaker Morant was nominated Best Play,
Australian Writers Guild, 1979*

IV. Questions 27 to 35 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from an autobiography.

from RING OF BRIGHT WATER

In this excerpt, the writer is taking a pet otter, Mijbil, from Iraq to the writer's home in Scotland.

The otter and I enjoyed the Consul-General's long-suffering hospitality for a fortnight.¹ The second night Mijbil came on to my bed in the small hours and remained asleep in the crook of my knees until the servant brought tea in the morning, and during that day he began to lose his apathy and take a keen, much

5 too keen, interest in his surroundings. I fashioned a collar, or rather a body-belt, for him, and took him on a lead to the bathroom, where for half an hour he went wild with joy in the water, plunging and rolling in it, shooting up and down the length of the bath underwater, and making enough slush and splash for a hippo. This, I was to learn, is a characteristic of otters; every drop of water must be, so to
10 speak, extended and spread about the place; a bowl must at once be overturned, or, if it will not overturn, be sat in and splashed in until it overflows. Water must be kept on the move and made to do things; when static it is as wasted and provoking as a buried talent.²

It was only two days later that he escaped from my bedroom as I entered it,
15 and I turned to see his tail disappearing round the bend of the corridor that led to the bathroom. By the time I had caught up with him he was up on the end of the bath and fumbling at the chromium taps with his paws. I watched, amazed by this early exhibition of an intelligence I had not yet guessed; in less than a minute he had turned the tap far enough to produce a dribble of water, and, after a moment
20 or two of distraction at his success, achieved the full flow. (He had, in fact, been fortunate to turn the tap the right way; on subsequent occasions he would as often as not try with great violence to screw it up still tighter, chittering with irritation and disappointment at its failure to co-operate.)

The Consulate had a big walled garden in which I exercised him, and, within
25 it, a high-netted tennis court. In this enclosure I established after a few days that

Continued

¹fortnight—two weeks

²buried talent—a reference to Christ's parable of the talents. In Biblical times, a talent was a unit of money. In the parable of the talents, a servant who was given one talent by his master, buried the talent to hide it while those who were given several talents used what they were given to increase their number of talents.

he would follow me without a lead and come to me when I called his name. By the end of a week he had accepted me in a relationship of dependence, and with this security established he began to display the principal otter characteristic of perpetual play. Very few species of animal habitually play after they are adult; 30 they are concerned with eating, sleeping, or procreating, or with the means to one or other of these ends. But otters are one of the few exceptions to this rule; right through their lives they spend much of their time in play that does not even require a partner. In the wild state they will play alone for hours with any convenient floating object in the water, pulling it down to let it bob up again, or 35 throwing it with a jerk of the head so that it lands with a splash and becomes a quarry to be pursued. No doubt in their holts³ they lie on their backs and play, too, as my otters have, with small objects that they can roll between their paws and pass from palm to palm, for at Camusfearna⁴ all the sea holts contain a profusion of small shells and round stones that can only have been carried in 40 for toys.

Mij would spend hours shuffling a rubber ball round the room like a four-footed soccer player using all four feet to dribble the ball, and he could also throw it, with a powerful flick of the neck, to a surprising height and distance. These games he would play either by himself or with me, but the really steady play of an 45 otter, the time-filling play born of a sense of well-being and a full stomach, seems to me to be when the otter lies on its back and juggles with small objects between its paws. This they do with an extraordinarily concentrated absorption and dexterity, as though a conjuror were trying to perfect some trick, as though in this play there were some goal that the human observer could not guess. Later, 50 marbles became Mij's favourite toys for this pastime—for pastime it is, without any anthropomorphizing⁵—and he would lie on his back rolling two or more of them up and down his wide, flat belly without ever dropping one to the floor, or, with forepaws upstretched, rolling them between his palms for minutes on end.

Even during that first fortnight in Basra⁶ I learnt a lot of Mij's language, a 55 language largely shared, I have discovered, by many other races of otter, though with curious variations in usage. The sounds are widely different in range. The simplest is the call note, which has been much the same in all the otters I have come across; it is a short, anxious, penetrating, though not loud, mixture between a whistle and a chirp. There is also a query, used at closer quarters; Mij would 60 enter a room, for instance, and ask whether there was anyone in it by the word "Ha!", uttered in a loud, harsh whisper. If he saw preparations being made to take him out or to the bath, he would stand at the door making a musical bubbling

Continued

³holts—lairs, dens where otters dwell

⁴Camusfearna—the name of the writer's home in Scotland

⁵anthropomorphizing—attributing human characteristics to animals or inanimate objects

⁶Basra—town and capital of a province in south-eastern Iraq

sound interspersed with chirps; but it was the chirp, in all its permutations and combinations of high and low, from the single querulous note to a continuous flow
65 of chitter, that was Mij's main means of vocal communication. He had one other note unlike any of these, a high, snarling caterwaul, a sort of screaming wail, that meant unequivocally that he was very angry, and if provoked further would bite.
He bit, in anger as opposed to nips in excitable play, four times during the year
70 that I had him. Each of these occasions was memorable in the highest degree,
though I was only once at the receiving end.

An otter's jaws are, of course, enormously powerful—indeed the whole animal is of strength almost unbelievable in a creature of its size—and those jaws are equipped with teeth to crunch into instant pulp fish heads that seem as hard as stone. Like a puppy that nibbles and gnaws one's hands because he has so few
75 other outlets for his feelings, otters seem to find the use of their mouths the most natural outlet for expression; knowing as I do their enormous crushing power I can appreciate what efforts my otters have made to be gentle in play, but their playful nips are gauged, perhaps, to the sensitivity of an otter's, rather than a human, skin. Mij used to look hurt and surprised when scolded for what must
80 have seemed to him the most meticulous gentleness, and though after a time he learned to be as soft mouthed as a sucking dove with me he remained all his life somewhat over-excitably good-humoured and hail-fellow-well-bit⁷ with strangers.

The days passed peacefully at Basra, but I dreaded dismally the unpostponable prospect of transporting Mij to England, and to his ultimate
85 destination, Camusfearna. B.O.A.C. would not fly livestock at all, and there was then no other line to London. Finally I booked a Trans-World flight to Paris, with a doubtful Air France booking on the same evening to London. Trans-World insisted that Mij should be packed into a box of not more than eighteen inches square, and that this box must be personal luggage, to be carried on the floor at
90 my feet.

Mij's body was at that time perhaps a little over a foot long and his tail another foot; the designing of this box employed many anxious hours for myself and the ever-helpful Robert Angorly,⁸ and finally he had the container constructed by craftsmen of his acquaintance. The box was delivered on the afternoon before
95 my departure on a 9:15 P.M. flight. It was zinc-lined, and divided into two compartments, one for sleeping and one for the relief of nature, and it appeared to my inexperienced eye as nearly ideal as could be contrived.

Dinner was at eight, and I thought it would be as well to put Mij into the box an hour before we left, so that he would become accustomed to it before the

Continued

⁷hail-fellow-well-bit—an ironic parody of the pleasant greeting “hail-fellow-well-met”

⁸Robert Angorly—a British-educated Iraqi who was the Crown Prince's game warden and was passionately interested in natural history

100 jolting of the journey began to upset him. I manoeuvred him into it, not without difficulty, and he seemed peaceful when I left him in the dark for a hurried meal.

But when I returned, with only barely time for the Consulate car to reach the airport for the flight, I was confronted with an appalling spectacle. There was complete silence from inside the box, but from its airholes and the chinks around the hinged lid, blood had trickled and dried on the white wood. I whipped off the padlock and tore open the lid, and Mij, exhausted and blood-spattered, whimpered and tried to climb up my leg. He had torn the zinc lining to shreds, scratching his mouth, his nose and his paws, and had left it jutting in spiky ribbons all around the walls and floor of the box. When I had removed the last of it, so that there were

110 no cutting edges left, it was just ten minutes until the time of the flight, and the airport was five miles distant. It was hard to bring myself to put the miserable Mij back into that box, that now represented to him a torture chamber, but I forced myself to do it, slamming the lid down on my fingers as I closed it before he could make his escape. Then began a journey the like of which I hope I shall never

115 know again.

I sat in the back of the car with the box beside me as the Arab driver tore through the streets of Basra like a ricochetting bullet. Donkeys reared, bicycles swerved wildly, out in the suburbs goats stampeded and poultry found unguessed powers of flight. Mij cried unceasingly in the box, and both of us were hurled to and fro and up and down like drinks in a cocktail shaker. Exactly as we drew to a screeching stop before the airport entrance I heard a splintering sound from the box beside me, and saw Mij's nose force up the lid. He had summoned all the strength in his small body and torn one of the hinges clean out of the wood.

The aircraft was waiting to take off; as I was rushed through the customs by infuriated officials I was trying all the time to hold down the lid of the box with one hand, and with the other, using a screwdriver purloined from the driver, to force back the screws into the splintered wood. But I knew that it could be no more than a temporary measure at best, and my imagination boggled at the thought of the next twenty-four hours.

Gavin Maxwell (1914–1969)
Scottish writer and naturalist

V. Questions 36 to 44 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from an article.

from RETURN TO GHANA

In the African savanna¹ all things must come to water, and so we crouch, watching, at the water hole's edge. A pair of crocodile eyes rises without a ripple. Egrets, polished white, squawk and argue, filling the trees that line the pool. A lean savanna antelope, a kob, approaches, hesitant, to drink.

10 Suddenly the birds, the insects, the very air is still. The kob is electric with caution, still as death. And death comes, a flaxen streak from the long grass. Egrets fill the air as kob and lion collide. Then it is over. Dragging the carcass slowly from the water, the lion catches our scent, turns and glares at us with lignite² eyes, standing over the last

20 faint quiverings of its prey. It is the way of the bush, beauty and death twisted in a knot. That is the part that holds you, that never changes. Everything else changes.

Mole National Park, Ghana is a speck of wild West Africa that few outsiders have seen. But for me, 17 years ago, it was home. I was a game warden, working with a group

30 of young Ghanaians called the Faunal Survey Team. Fresh out of school, I had been sent over as a wildlife biologist representing

CUSO, the Canadian University Service Overseas. It is hard now to remember what made me drop my life in western Canada to go to Ghana. I knew I wanted adventure. I had no visions of changing Africa, or of teaching great things to Africans. The changes would be in me; I would be the student.

40 Once known as the "white man's grave" because of malaria and sleeping sickness, Ghana was never thoroughly settled by the British as Kenya was, and all but one of its impressive array of wildlife reserves were established after Ghanaian independence in 1957. When I arrived from Canada in 1969, only three parks had been created and there was only a handful of people to manage them, headed by Dr. Emmanuel Asibey, a Scottish-trained Ghanaian. In the bush were half a dozen Ghanaian rangers and one transplanted Canadian, me.

50 It was a strange and wonderful time. I remember best the nights when the moon was full and we camped by rivers without names. We joked around the fire and ate rice and thick meat stew. In the morning we would wake in the half-light of dawn and head into the

Continued

¹savanna—a flat grassland

²lignite—brownish-black coal

bush, walking survey lines in search of wild things, filling our notebooks with records of the comings and

70 goings of kob and waterbuck, hartebeest and roan antelope.

There was more to it than that, of course. There was hunger, dysentery and the awful sweating shakes of malaria. Sometimes, as when a buffalo turned on us, dragging a leg festered by a wire snare, there was gut-twisting fear. But from the moments of fear and

80 the miles and sweat, we created a parks system, gazetting³ a dozen major parks and reserves by 1973.

But that was a long time ago. Out of Africa now one hears only of turmoil, war, starvation, of wildlife retreating before the weight of greed, drought and too many people. What about Ghana? I did not know, and it was with trepidation that I

90 boarded the plane to return.

I wanted to see, firsthand, how wildlife had fared in the places I had known. I wanted to know if those places that had been dear to me had been swept away, or if somehow they had survived. More than anything, I wanted to see my friends and co-workers. From Accra, Ghana's capital, I traveled north to

100 Mole Park, three days' hard driving.

At the headquarters, Ofori Fringpong, who had been my partner in running the survey team, looked up from his work, perplexed at the sight of this strange white

man. Then his face lit up. "Ehh!" he shouted, and we hugged and laughed. He was still lean and hard. But his eyes showed the little wrinkles that come from rugged living and too much sun, and he had a patch of silver in his beard to rival my bald spot.

We went down to the park motel for a drink, and to talk of the fate of old friends. Ofori now runs the park. Several former team members have gone to work in the new parks we created. Others have retired to

110 their villages. One man was killed the year before by an elephant, and just a few months before, another took a poacher's musket ball in the stomach. He had lain in the bush for three days before he was found and taken to hospital. Somehow he survived.

"As for the game, Bob, the poaching is too, too bad. And we

130 have no petrol, no vehicles, nothing. Sometimes I think," and Ofori swept his hand across the park before us, "sometimes I wonder if it is all finished . . ." Then a dozen kob came to water below us, and far off in the savanna an elephant trumpeted.

Mole Park is a triumph for Ofori, who has managed to keep the

140 reserve working over the past two decades while Ghana's economy and the condition of most of its people have declined steadily. Recent letters from friends in Ghana

³gazetting—publishing or announcing

Continued

tell me that conditions are now actually improving, with roads and bridges being built and produce and exports finally beginning to move again. But just four years ago, when

150 I sat with Ofori, roads were in disrepair throughout the country, vehicle parts were almost impossible to get, gas was rationed. Broken plumbing remained broken. Even simple foods were expensive and hard to come by. And yet, in such times, Ofori and the game department had survived. Almost miraculously, they had staffed a

160 half-dozen new parks and developed the apparatus to protect them.

Next morning, we boarded a beat-up Land Rover and jolted down a long, narrow track into the park. There is no better way to travel in the African bush than in the open back of a Rover, with the wind in your face and the bush sliding by. We saw bushbuck and kob, as well

170 as birds—Abyssinian rollers and a Malachite kingfisher.

Down on the flats, we jumped a herd of hartebeest—tall, long-faced antelope, mooselike in their ugliness. They ran beside us, then charged across the road in a cloud of dust. We shouted and laughed. It was good to see a big herd like this because their numbers are down

180 along the margins of Mole Park. Meat poachers are taking their toll. But if poaching is a serious threat, it is dwarfed by the loss of habitat.

Throughout Africa, wild land disappears at the staggering rate of 40 acres per minute. In Ghana, the human population has doubled in the three decades since independence. The farmer and his hoe, the engineer and his dams, the white-smocked doctor with another newborn wailing in her hands: these destroy more African wildlife than the poacher and his musket ever will.

Nonetheless, Africa's story is not one of constant, catastrophic decline. There are successes. If I had been asked 17 years ago to predict the fate of Ghana's elephants, I would have guessed that many of the herds would be gone by now. In fact, every major herd we found in 1970 remains today. And as Ofori and I drove farther into Mole Park, we saw far more elephant sign⁴ than we ever saw in the old days. One reason, undoubtedly, is the game department's anti-poaching effort. Another is the scarcity of rifles in Ghana capable of killing an elephant. More important, however, is the realization by local people that elephants are important to Ghana's future.

In Damongo, the town nearest the park, tribal law has always dictated that the tusks and ears of an elephant that is killed must be brought to the chief. But the chief no longer sanctions elephant killing.

Continued

⁴elephant sign—an indicator of the presence or trail of elephants

His about-face followed long sessions with department staff, especially with those in the department who come from his region. Africans talking amongst themselves accomplished what no amount of “international concern” could have done.

230 Back at Mole Park headquarters, another old member of the survey team awaited me. Ahmed Nuhu is a squat, tough northerner, his face slashed by the traditional scars of the Walla tribe. With him was his wife, Vivian, also a game department officer.

Nuhu, who will not trade the sweat and danger of the bush for a desk job, is a rare breed anywhere, and one especially needed in Africa. His perspective on wildlife is a combination of his own culture’s attitudes and of the knowledge he absorbed at Mweka College. The college, located on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, trains people from across Africa in

250 parks and wildlife management. It not only provides students with an intellectual basis for management but also with practical skills such as surveying and the use of firearms. Most important, students are instilled, around campfires in the bush, with a pride in being “for the game.”

As darkness fell, the four of us 260 went down to the water hole. The evening air was full of savanna sounds—the grunt of warthogs, the bark of baboons, the strange hacking call of guinea fowl. A branch snapped loudly in the bush: elephants feeding. In the dense brush by the pool, tusks glinted in the moonlight. A huge gray form emerged. We had no rifle. Ears 270 wide, he tested the air, found our scent, turned and was gone. We laughed as we headed back toward the motel, but there was an ancient taste in our mouths, a taste from when our species did not rule Africa.

Bob Jamieson
Contemporary Canadian writer

- VI. Robin is preparing a brief oral report on the article “Return to Ghana.” Read the first draft of Robin’s report, carefully noting her revisions, and answer questions 45 to 51 in your Questions Booklet.

PROTECT THE ANIMALS

Savanna
Paragraph Suppose you were to travel to “Darkest Africa,” and instead of ~~forests~~ and wild animals, you saw farmlands, chickens, and cattle. What would you feel? Bob Jamieson a man from B.C. who once worked in Africa ~~as a game warden,~~ worried that he would face the disappointment of seeing fewer animals when he went back. In an essay entitled “Return to Ghana,” he tells about what he did find and presents us with ~~lessons~~ ~~things~~ we need to learn about saving wildlife.
Maybe you've had an experience like mine.
Paragraph I've encountered this type of loss. When I was little, my grandparents would take me along and drive to their favourite fishing hole away out west. When we got there, my grandma would tell me about the best places to cast my line, and I always caught fish. I went back there last summer after years of not going, intending to sleep in my grandparents little trailer. The most excitement I felt was that night when something bumped the trailer hard and woke me up. Then it went “Moo.” The next day when I went fishing, it seemed to me that the air didn't smell as fresh. There weren't as many trees, and the creek had green, slimy clumps in it, but no fish. ~~At least I didn't catch any.~~ Going back to a favourite place can be disappointing.
Paragraph Bob Jamieson was apprehensive about going back to Africa after being away for 17 years. Would Ghana have changed? Would the animals still be there? There had been war, starvation, drought, and a bad economy since he had left.

Continued

Poachers had been busy. Years before, Jamieson had worked as a game warden and he'd helped to set up new parks. Now, he was afraid most of the elephant herds would be gone. ^{human}
The population had doubled. What do you think he found?

- Paragraph 4** I thought that he would find things to be really bad, but actually he found good news and bad news. First, the bad news. Farms, modernization, more people, and poachers had ruined animal ^{habitat} homes and killed many wild animals.
- Paragraph 5** Now, the good news. Local people had learned to care that there be wild animals in the future, and Jamieson found even more evidence of the presence of elephants than he had years before. Animals that were being killed off earlier were now protected. Jamieson found that many children now want to grow up to be game wardens, and, since there are more parks than ever, maybe they will. Because the people care, wildlife may survive in Africa.
- Paragraph 6** What about wildlife in Alberta? What should we learn from Jamieson? First of all, like the people of Ghana, we have to imagine a world without wild animals, so we will realize how important they are to us. Second, we need jobs for people, so they don't turn to poaching. Third, we need more parks—Africa has a lot more parks than North America. Less than two per cent of our land is set aside for national parks. The big thing is that we learn that nature's side is OUR side.
Let's do it!

VII. Questions 52 to 58 in your Questions Booklet are based on this poem.

ROADS TO BUFFALO LAKE

- Hot always hot in Mirror¹
when we left
ruts at corners of
sandy streets
5 sucking narrow wheels down
- but woods were cool as
sawdust-littered icehouses
- white road beckoning us
over hills bumping
10 around the buffalo's hump
as we watched for our shining lake
scorched landscape oasis
- Old Chevvie bucking to top
of first high hill
15 revealing
glint of waves
on distant sandbars
before woods again
fragrant with balm-of-gilead²
- 20 weaving through trail mazes
off the main road
seeking Bar Harbour Beach
—but always a wrong turn
dead end at barn door
- 25 or straw stack
(for my father loved new trails
loved fitting wheels into
cool ruts
leading over knolls where
30 Cree and Metis hunters
had stalked buffalo
coming to water)

Continued

¹Mirror—small town in central Alberta

²balm-of-gilead—type of poplar tree with sweet-smelling sap and leaves

- At each wrong turn we cried
Where's the lake?
- 35 until glimpsing blue
 through screen
 of green poplars
we raced through hot backwater pools
to the cool of waves
- 40 curling sandribbed bottom

Richard Woollatt
Contemporary Canadian writer

VIII. Questions 59 to 70 in your Questions Booklet are based on this short story.

THE FATALIST

Nicknames given in small towns are the homely, familiar ones: Haim Bellybutton, Yekel Cake, Sarah Gossip, Gittel Duck, and similar names. But in the Polish town to which I came as a teacher in my young days I heard of someone called Benjamin Fatalist. I promptly became curious. How did they 5 come to the word “fatalist” in a small town? And what did that person do to earn it? The secretary of the Young Zionist organization¹ where I taught Hebrew told me about it.

The man in question wasn’t a native here. He stemmed from somewhere in Courland. He had come to town in 1916 and posted notices that he was a teacher 10 of German. It was during the Austrian occupation,² and everyone wanted to learn German. German is spoken in Courland and he, Benjamin Schwartz—that was his real name—got many students of both sexes. Just as the secretary was talking, he pointed to the window and exclaimed, “There he goes now!”

I looked through the window and saw a short man, dark, in a derby and with a 15 curled mustache that was already long out of style. He was carrying a briefcase. After the Austrians left, the secretary continued, no one wanted to study German anymore and the Poles gave Benjamin Schwartz a job in the archives. If someone needed a birth certificate, they came to him. He had a fancy handwriting. He had learned Polish, and he also became a kind of hedge lawyer.³

20 The secretary said, “He came here as if dropping from heaven. At that time, he was a bachelor of some twenty-odd. The young people had a club, and when an educated person came to our town this was cause for a regular celebration. He was invited to our club and a box evening was arranged in his honor. Questions were placed in a box, and he was supposed to draw them out and answer them. A 25 girl asked whether he believed in Special Providence, and, instead of replying in a few words, he spoke for a whole hour. He said that he didn’t believe in God, but that all things were determined, every trifle. If one ate an onion for supper, it was because one *had* to eat an onion. It had been so preordained a billion years ago. If you walked in the street and tripped over a pebble, it was fated that you should 30 fall. He described himself as a fatalist. It had been destined that he come to our town, though it appeared accidental.

“He spoke too long; nevertheless a discussion followed. ‘Is there no such thing as chance?’ someone asked, and he replied, ‘No such thing as chance.’ ‘If

Continued

¹Young Zionist organization—a Jewish group that worked to establish a Jewish homeland in Israel

²Austrian occupation—the occupation of Poland by German-speaking Austrians during World War I

³hedge lawyer—one who works on legal matters on a part-time basis

that is so,' another asked, 'what's the point of working, of studying? Why learn a
35 trade or bring up children? Well, and why contribute to Zionism and agitate for a
Jewish homeland?'

“‘The way it is written in the books of fate, that’s how it has to be,’ Benjamin
Schwartz replied. ‘If it was destined that someone open a store and go bankrupt,
he has to do this. All the efforts man made were fate, too, because *free* choice is
40 nothing but an illusion.’ The debate lasted well into the night and from that time
on, he was called the Fatalist. A new word was added to the town’s vocabulary.
Everyone here knows what a fatalist is, even the beadle of the synagogue⁴ and the
poorhouse attendant.

“We assumed that after that evening the crowd would get tired of these
45 discussions and turn back to the real problems of our time. Benjamin himself said
that this wasn’t a thing that could be decided by logic. Either one believed in it or
not. But somehow all our youth became preoccupied with the question. We
would call a meeting about certificates to Palestine or about education, but instead
of sticking to these subjects, they would discuss fatalism. At that time our library
50 acquired a copy of Lermontov’s *A Hero of Our Time*, translated into Yiddish,⁵
which describes a fatalist, Pechorin.

“Everyone read this novel, and there were those among us who wanted to test
their luck. We already knew about Russian roulette⁶ and some of us might have
tried it if a revolver were available. But none of us had one.

55 “Now listen to this. There was a girl among us, Heyele Minz, a pretty girl,
smart, active in our movement, a daughter of a wealthy man. Her father had the
biggest dry-goods store in town, and all the young fellows were crazy about her.
But Heyele was choosy. She found something wrong in everybody. She had a
sharp tongue, what the Germans call *schlagfertig*. If you said something to her,
60 she came right back at you with a sharp and cutting retort. When she wanted to
she could ridicule a person in a clever, half-joking way. The Fatalist fell in love
with her soon after he arrived. He wasn’t at all bashful. One evening he came up
to her and said, ‘Heyele, it’s fated that you marry me, and since that is so, why
delay the inevitable?’

65 “He said this aloud so that everyone would hear, and it created an uproar.
Heyele answered. ‘It’s fated that I should tell you that you’re an idiot and that
you’ve got lots of nerve besides, and therefore I’m saying it. You’ll have to
forgive me, it was all preordained in the celestial books a billion years ago.’

“Not long afterward, Heyele became engaged to a young man from

Continued

⁴beadle of the synagogue—minor official in a Jewish place of worship

⁵Yiddish—the language spoken by many Jewish people in Europe

⁶Russian roulette—an act of bravado consisting of spinning the cylinder of a revolver loaded with one cartridge, pointing the muzzle at one’s own head, and pulling the trigger

70 Hrubieszow, the chairman of the Poale Zion there. The wedding was postponed for a year because the fiancé had an older sister who was engaged and who had to be married first. The boys chided the Fatalist, and he said, 'If Heyele is to be mine, she will be mine,' and Heyele replied, 'I am to be Ozer Rubinstein's, not yours. That's what fate wanted.'

75 "One winter evening the discussion flared up again about fate, and Heyele spoke up, 'Mr. Schwartz, or Mr. Fatalist, if you really believe in what you say, and you are even ready to play Russian roulette if you had a revolver, I have a game for you that's even more dangerous.'

80 "I want to mention here that at that time the railroad didn't reach to our town yet. It passed two miles away, and it never stopped there at all. It was the train from Warsaw to Lvov. Heyele proposed to the Fatalist that he lie down on the rails a few moments before the train passed over them. She argued, 'If it's fated that you live, you will live and have nothing to fear. However, if you don't believe in fatalism, then . . . '

85 "We all burst out laughing. Everyone was sure that the Fatalist would come up with some pretext to get out of it. Lying down on the tracks meant certain death. But the Fatalist said, 'This, like Russian roulette, is a game, and a game requires another participant who must risk something, too.' He went on: 'I'll lie down on the tracks as you propose, but you must make a sacred vow that if I

90 should live, you'll break your engagement to Ozer Rubinstein and marry me.'

95 "A deadly silence fell over the hall. Heyele grew pale, and she said, 'Good, I accept your conditions.' 'Give me your sacred vow on it,' the Fatalist said, and Heyele gave him her hand and said, 'I have no mother, she died of the cholera. But I swear on her soul that if you will keep your word, I will keep mine. If not, then let my honor be stained forever.' She turned to us and went on, 'You are all witnesses. If I should break my word, you can all spit in my face.'

100 "I'll make it short. Everything was settled that evening. The train would pass our town around two in the afternoon. At one-thirty our whole group would meet by the tracks and the Fatalist would demonstrate whether he was a real fatalist or just a braggart. We all promised to keep the matter secret because if the older people had found out about it there would have been a terrible fuss.

105 "I didn't sleep a wink that night, and as far as I know, none of the others did either. Most of us were convinced that at the last minute the Fatalist would have second thoughts and back out. Some also suggested that when the train came into sight or the rails started to hum, we should drag the Fatalist away by force. Well, but all this posed a gruesome danger. Even now as I speak of it a shudder runs through me.

"The next day we all got up early. I was so scared that I couldn't swallow any food at breakfast. The whole thing might not have happened if we hadn't read

Continued

110 Lermontov's book. Not all of us went; there were only six boys and four girls, including Heyele Minz. It was freezing cold outside. The Fatalist, I remember, wore a light jacket and a cap. We met on the Zamosc road, on the outskirts of town. I asked him, 'Schwartz, how did you sleep last night?' and he answered, 'Like any other night.' You actually couldn't tell what he was feeling, but Heyele
115 was as white as if she had just gotten over the typhoid. I went up to her and said, 'Heyele, do you know that you're sending a person to his death?' And she said, 'I'm not sending him. He has plenty of time to change his mind.'

"I'll never forget that day as long as I live. None of us will ever forget it. We walked along and the snow kept falling on us the whole time. We came to the
120 tracks. I thought that on account of the snow the train might possibly not be running, but apparently someone had cleared the rails. We had arrived a good hour too early, and, believe me, this was the longest hour I ever spent. Around fifteen minutes before the train was due to come by, Heyele said, 'Schwartz, I've thought it all over and I don't want you to lose your life because of me. Do me a favor and let's forget the whole thing.' The Fatalist looked at her and asked, 'So you've changed your mind? You want that fellow from Hrubieszow at any price, huh?' She said, 'No, it's not the fellow from Hrubieszow, it's your life. I hear that you have a mother and I don't want her to lose a son on account of me.'
125 Heyele could barely utter these words. She spoke and she trembled. The Fatalist
130 said, 'If you will keep your promise, I'm ready to keep mine, but under one condition: stand a little farther away. If you try to force me back at the last minute, the game is over.' Then he cried out, 'Let everyone move twenty paces back!' He seemed to hypnotize us with his words, and we began to back up. He cried out again, 'If someone tries to pull me away, I'll grab him by his coat and he
135 will share my fate.' We realized how dangerous this could be. It happens more than once that when you try to save someone from drowning, both are dragged down, and drown.

"As we moved back, the rails began to vibrate and hum and we heard the whistle of the locomotive. We began to yell as one, 'Schwartz, don't do it!
140 Schwartz, have pity!' But even as we yelled, he stretched out across the tracks. There was then just one line of track. One girl fainted. We were sure that in a second we would see a person cut in half. I can't tell you what I went through in those few seconds. My blood literally began to seethe from excitement. At that moment a loud screech was heard and a thud, and the train came to a halt no more than a yard away from the Fatalist. I saw in a mist how the engineer and fireman
145 jumped down from the locomotive. They yelled at him and dragged him away. Many passengers disembarked. Some of us ran away out of fear of being arrested. It was a real commotion. I myself stayed where I was and watched everything.

Continued

Heyele ran up to me, put her arms around me, and started to cry. It was more than
150 a cry, it was like the howling of a beast—Give me a cigarette. I can't talk about it.
It chokes me. Excuse me. . . .

I gave the secretary a cigarette and watched how it shook between his fingers.
He drew in the smoke and said, "That is actually the whole story."

"She married him?" I asked.

155 "They have four children."

"I guess the engineer managed to halt the train in time," I remarked.

"Yes, but the wheels were only one yard away from him."

"Did this convince you about fatalism?" I asked.

160 "No. I wouldn't make such a bet even if you offered me all the fortunes in
the world."

"Is he still a fatalist?"

"He still is."

"Would he do it again?" I asked.

The secretary smiled. "Not for Heyele."

Issac Bashevis Singer

American Yiddish writer born in Poland.

Winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature, 1978

Credits

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